Montana State Library

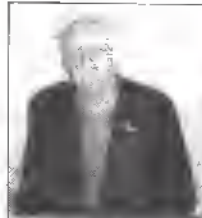# Annual Report

MONTANA
State
Library
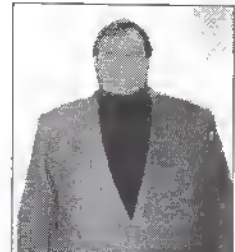
State Fiscal Year 1998

Message from the Commission

Commissioner
Rosemary Garvey

Commissioner
Harold Stearns

Commissioner Mike
Schulz

On behalf of the Montana State Library Commission, I am pleased to present this annual report for the Montana State Library for FY 1998.

The Commission provides vision and direction for the State Library as the agency strives to provide information and library services, and improve public library service in Montana. As part of our governing duties, the Commission adopted a strategic plan and the following Vision Statement for the State Library.

Commissioner
Cheri Bergeron

Commissioner
Mary Doggett

Fiscal Year 1998 saw the beginning of many exciting initiatives designed to meet the Commission's vision for Montana's citizens. I hope that this report conveys the progress that we have made in reaching this vision.

Dorothy Laird
Commission Chair

Commissioner David
Johnson

Vision of Libraries in Montana

Montana citizens have equal and easy access to quality library services without restriction or censorship or the violation of privacy. Every citizen depends upon, values, and supports continued and enhanced library services. In Montana, library workers receive respect and recognition for their skills and abilities.

Montana's libraries are integral components of their communities and design library services by consulting citizens to understand community needs. The library staff and the governing officials promote library services in all settings. Each community supports its library through sufficient tax support or institutional appropriations.

Libraries cooperate with other libraries and organizations to strengthen services by sharing material resources and professional expertise. Each library accepts a role in improving library services on the state, regional, and national level.

A message from the State Librarian

On behalf of the State Library's staff, I am pleased to prepare the annual report to the citizens of Montana. This past year was a busy one for all those involved with at the Montana State Library [MSL]. We consider our work in Montana to be a privilege and we pledge to continue to improve our provision and advocacy of library and information service in the next year.

At the beginning of the past fiscal year, the Commission adopted a strategic plan for the agency. This report lists our accomplishments under that strategic plan. I hope that you find this report to be an informative snapshot of our past work and a glimpse of what the future holds.

Montana Talking Books Library [TBL]

GOAL 1

Staff, volunteers and patrons will work in a safe, comfortable and efficient working environment.

Talking Books Library staff reorganized the library to increase safety, comfort, and efficiency. Specifically they:

- ℘ moved the book inspection center closer to the book stacks,
- ℘ moved the patron card printer to the new machine room to cut down on noise and vibration,
- ℘ moved the machine room next to the staff area,
- ℘ restructured the mailroom, and
- ℘ built temporary shelving for faster check in and check out of popular titles.

Volunteer Barbara Baarson receiving a Special Appreciation Award from Darlene Staffeldt.

GOAL 3

There will be sufficient funding and staff to offer the best possible patron service.

TBL received a $35,344 donation from the Adelaide Gelhaus estate.

TBL Staff. Front row: Carolyn Meier, Alberta Blanton, with her employee of the year award, and Suzie Merrin. Back row: Lee Madison, Christie Briggs, and Roberta Gebhardt

GOAL 2

Montana residents will receive the best possible service from the Talking Book Library.

Montana Talking Book Library served patrons a total of 17,514 times during Fiscal Year 1998, with 147,851 titles being sent out. Of that number, 146,701 titles were talking books and 1,150 were descriptive videos, cassette magazines, and large print magazines. Approximately 2,500 Montana citizens are library patrons.

TBL transferred its automated system to the Keystone Library Automated System (KLAS) in December 1997. This new system has allowed TBL to provide faster and more accurate service to its patrons. The benefits of this system include:

- ℘ stable software/hardware environment,
- ℘ new catalog search capabilities, and
- ℘ quick identification of patron interests.

Library & Information Services Department [LISD]

GOAL 1

The Library facility is comfortable and easy-to-use.

The LISD staff made extensive modifications in the arrangement of seating, patron access computers, and staff desks in the patron use area. These changes have made it more convenient for patrons to use our varied resources and to receive assistance from staff.

Nina Opel, Volunteer

Patcharin Williams, State Documents Librarian, and Don Cornish, Collections Management Librarian working at the reference desk.
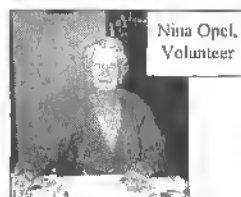

Barbara Pepper Rotness, Acquisitions Technician

Maggie Meredith, Reference Consulting Librarian

Dixie Carlson, Interlibrary Loan Technician

Marilyn White, Supervising Reference Librarian

GOAL 2

Provide access to the current and accurate information needed by Montana's government, libraries, and citizens.

Additions to the collection included 519 reference resources and books, 9,481 federal documents and 1,237 state agency publications. The department distributed 5,356 state agency publications to Montana libraries for use in those communities.

LISD patron services staff researched 313 topics and document sources, responded to 3,987 questions at the reference desk, and supplied 7,952 books and documents to state government employees and officials, libraries, and walk in patrons.

E-Rate Workshop for Broad Valleys Federation in Anaconda.
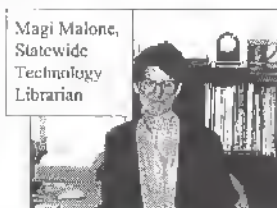
Library Development Department [LDD]

GOAL 1

All Montana citizens have direct access to information through telecommunications at their libraries.

LDD used federal grant funds (LSTA) to offer Internet connections to all public libraries not yet connected. By the end of Fiscal Year 1998, fifteen of these libraries were participating in the Internet Connectivity Project. LDD staff also offered a series of Basic Internet/E-Mail Workshops for librarians involved in the LSTA project.
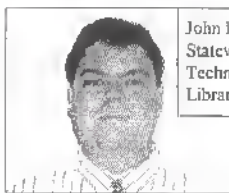
John Finn, Statewide Technology Librarian

Magi Malone, Statewide Technology Librarian

Bob Cooper, Statewide Technology Librarian

Diane Gunderson, Data Coordinator

GOAL 2

Montana citizens are served by librarians and trustees who are knowledgeable about all aspects of library service.

LDD statewide technology librarians provided on-site, telephone, and E-mail consultation on all issues currently facing Montana. Topics include applications for telecommunication discounts, statewide database subscriptions, library statistics, collection management, and the availability of grant funds.

LDD statewide technology librarians addressed a wide range of technological issues facing librarians including automated circulation systems, Internet connectivity, and interlibrary loan procedures.

LDD also assessed the needs of public library trustees with a survey which solicited ideas on training topics and trustee manual revisions.
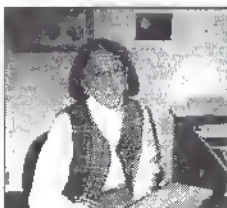
LDD prepared a schedule of training/continuing education opportunities through the year 2000, including estimated budget totals for each activity. To keep Montana librarians informed, LDD posted and updated a calendar of scheduled library continuing education activities, including training offered by groups and individuals not associated with MSL, on the MSL home page.

Program 7, the Natural Resource Information System [NRIS], contains three departments - Heritage, the Water Information System [WIS], and Geographic Information System [GIS], all devoted to collecting and distributing information about Montana's natural resources.

MONTANA
Natural Resource Information System

NRIS Requests by Sector
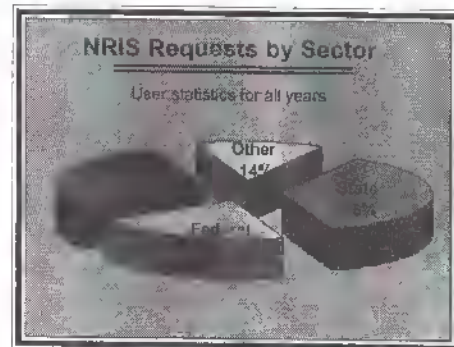
GOAL 1

NRIS works to ensure equitable access to natural resource information for all of Montana's citizens, governments, businesses, and industries by using new and emerging information technologies. NRIS improves access to natural resource information by developing state-of-the-art tools that make information easier to use. NRIS also increases the value of existing natural resource information by facilitating and participating in collaborative information sharing projects.

The Heritage Program provided tailored information products for about 70 requests per month. Major uses included environmental review for weed management, open cut mining, timber sales, subdivisions, and utility, pipeline, and highway corridor construction and maintenance.

The Heritage Program serviced an additional 650 user requests per month through the new Website, giving users direct access to databases on sensitive species, including search capabilities, species and habitat photos, distribution maps, and an online request form for more information.
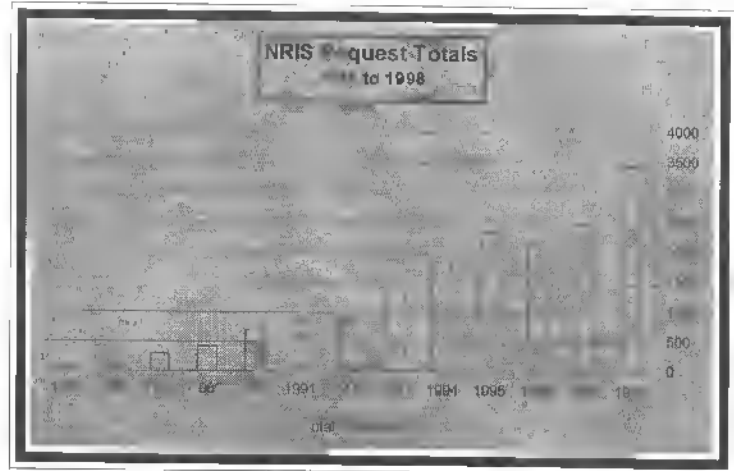
NRIS GIS and WIS staff handled 2,663 requests. This number represents mediated requests, that is, requests that are handled personally by staff.

NRIS continues to increase access to data and information via the Internet World Wide Web (WWW). An average of 430 requests per day were filled by the GIS web pages, and 71 requests per day were filled by accessing the Water web pages.

NRIS increased the number of databases available via the web from 160 to 258 during FY 98. All databases deployed online are in a new format that makes them easier to download and use.

Pam Smith, NRIS Program Specialist

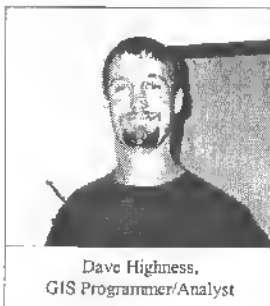Sue Crispin, Natural Heritage Director

GOAL 2

NRIS coordinates and promotes the program among all public agencies. Interagency coordination and the development of data standards help insure the accuracy and quality of the data; helps avoid the duplication of data creation and distribution; helps insure that critical data sets are created; and promotes the sharing of resources and information.

Kris Larson, GIS Metadata Coordinator, and pal Tweaty

Dave Highness, GIS Programmer/Analyst

NRIS, in cooperation with the Department of Administration, established a GIS Metadata Coordinator position. The position trains others on how to document GIS data layers and share that documentation (metadata) to better inform information users. The Metadata Coordinator also actively promotes and refines the national metadata standard.

The Heritage Program and the Water Information System began work on a standardized online data entry application for recording and sharing information generated by wetland site evaluations. Work is being done in cooperation with the Department of Environmental Quality and the Department of Transportation.
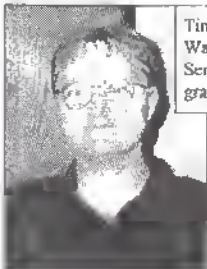
GOAL 3

Provide User Support: Besides insuring natural resource information is available, NRIS helps patrons use this information by providing technical assistance, consulting, and developing information analysis and interpretation tools. Without the tools to analyze and interpret information, data have less value.

Tim Weisenburger, Water Information Service, GIS Programmer/Analyst

Jim Stimson, NRIS Director

NRIS and Heritage staff provided training to state agencies and general presentations on how to use desktop GIS software and access natural resource information via the NRIS web pages. These workshops improve access to information by showing patrons how to better use new and emerging technologies.

Five ArcView training workshops were given during FY '98 to state agencies. Staff from the following agencies attended the 2-day workshops: Department of Environmental Quality, Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, and the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation.

General presentations were provided to the Montana Association of County Planners, Montana Association of Conservation Districts, Montana Library Association, and the Montana Environmental Education Association.

NRIS developed and deployed three interactive GIS applications on the Internet which allow the user to view multiple data layers and query select layers for specific information. These applications represent a significant step in making GIS available to patrons via the web and common web-browsing software.

The Natural Heritage Program continued to refine web-based interactive access to databases on sensitive species of plants and animals.

NRIS and Natural Heritage staff designed and initiated building web-based end-user applications to standardize data input for volunteer water monitoring and wetlands data. Both tools will be valuable to citizen groups and agencies involved with collecting these kinds of data. The tools will also make it easier to share information with the information user community.